



The Unknown Horizon

Jayant Gupta

Artists' Statement

As the whole world underwent a deep anxiety because of an invisible threat; I channelled my artistic inquiry towards introspecting the profound realities of life and the delicate environment we live in.

After the initial phase of the totalitarian lockdown, the Chaturmas period arrived, which according to Indian mythology, is a time for self-isolation and penance, when people practice some form of abstinence. The lockdown experience raised questions about what mankind really needs; in contrast to the external influences that manipulate our desires.

My personal struggle is to understand my own internal conflicts of modern-day emotions reflecting materiality, violence and alienation contextual to this time and space. My creative efforts are to invite viewers to evaluate their own personal positions in this crumbled situation through an evocative enquiry of their inner selves today.

Evolutionarily my painterly space has amassed a dark and mystical character of abstract expressionism around itself. It embodies a sense of void, a juxtaposition of classical and diversified compositional structures, defined and obscure perspectives; mostly in a somewhat homochromatic palette.

In this body of work, I start from a photographic image which I have captured or collected over the course of time and work with it towards making it an element of my visual composition. Elements like lines, doodles, patches; layer up to create an expressive visual language. The works are conceived through a process of negotiated and curated automatism such that those visual elements act as a voice for my undefined thoughts.

Isolated Man
Drawing on Paper
8 x 5" / 21 x 12 cms; 2020

When one connects with the eternal, the body's essence transcends and becomes one with the cosmos. Self-isolation paves way for the efforts towards achieving this ideal. This work represents that ideal man who is masked, isolated and who grows closer to the cosmic energy through his attempts at contemplation and solitude.



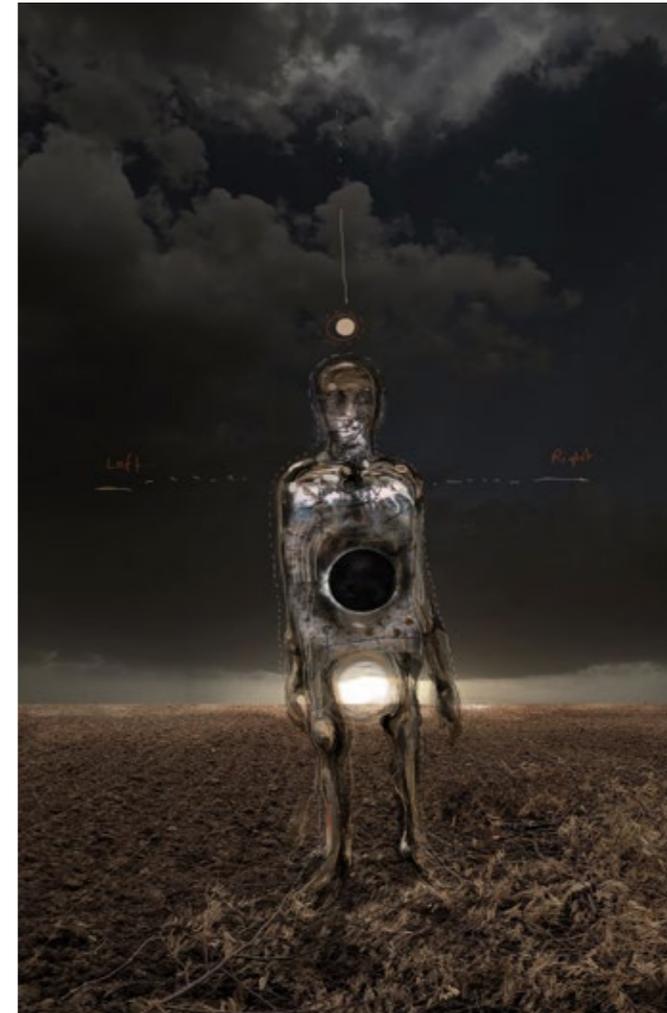
Finding the Way
Drawing on Paper
8 x 12" / 21 x 30 cms; 2020

The 'catastrophic data transposal' of the post truth era shatters one's faith in the reality one lives and believes in. This work depicts that state of scepticism an individual feels where he does not even know what to think nor what to choose nor how to get up and walk out of this state and keep his sanity intact.



Negotiating the Contemporary
Digital Archival Print
33 x 20" / 84 x 51 cms ; 2020
Edition of 15

The establishment of a singular ideological identity does not find easy ground in today's post truth era. In such a case, an individual's personal negotiations are no longer straightforward but are ultimately a complicated navigation amongst biased institutional and political impositions. To keep away from swaying towards such influences is itself a conscious political choice and path today. In this work, I depict my social dilemma of placing myself amongst universal elements of factuality alongside my internal conflicts of negotiating attributes of other contemporary eventualities.



Self at the Unknown Horizon
Digital Archival Print
24 x 18" / 61 x 46 cms; 2020
Edition of 15

The act of alienating oneself from the dichotomy of institutionalised social, ideological and value structures is a necessary step for an artist to find his position within his reality. My personal attempts saw me withdrawing from human life and its associated material cosmos: although not in my physical reality but in my imagined utopia. This work here shows me in that unknown, unidentifiable space; floating without any structures of hierarchy mediating me. The idea of the incomplete body dreams of questioning my existential position.



Yoga Nidra
Digital Archival Print
34 x 24"/ 88 x 61 cms; 2020
Edition of 15

[The Ocean] becomes the bed of the lotus-aveled Vishnu when at the termination of every Yuga that deity of immeasurable power enjoys yoga-nidra, the deep sleep under the spell of spiritual meditation. (Mahabharata, Book 1, section XXI)

According to Hindu mythology Lord Vishnu goes into sleep (Yoga-Nidra) for four months during the Chaumasa period. This Yoga Nidra is a state of consciousness between waking and sleeping during which Vishnu withdraws his senses within himself, becomes one with the universe and is in the absolute state of realisation.

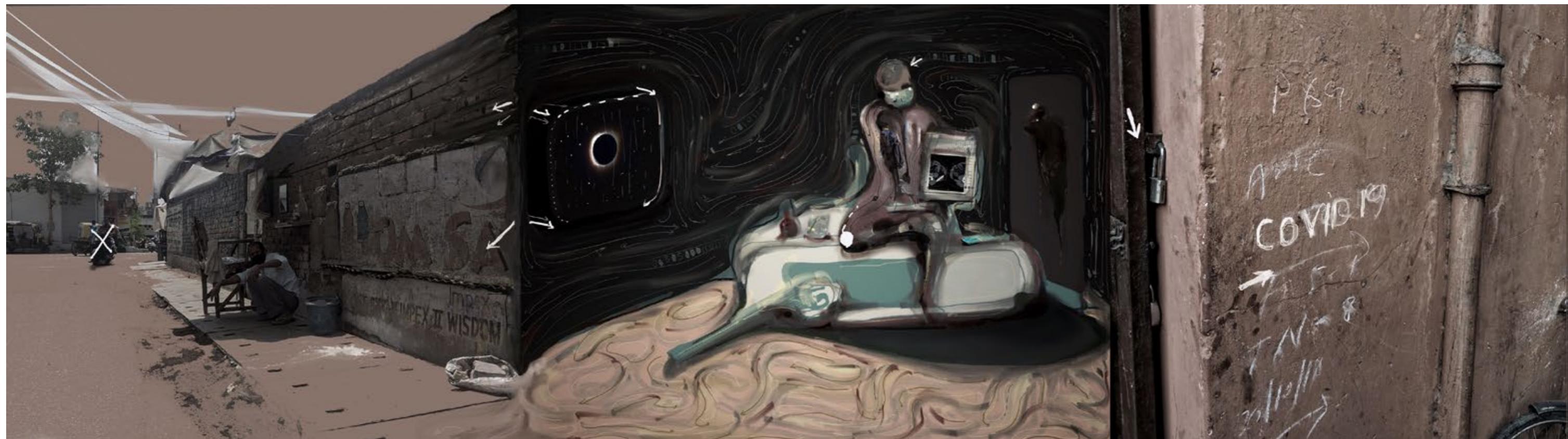
In a wider sense, for me, practicing art is itself a practice of meditation where I find myself transcending into a creative Yoga Nidra. This work more or less represents a very personal restless process of contemplative negotiation with the conflicting space of contemporary realities.



Seeking Spaces: Inner and Outer
Digital Archival Print
7 x 27" / 18 x 70 cms; 2020
Edition of 15

During the Lockdown, we became forcefully isolated in a space with the fear of an invisible virus; but what about our own inner viruses and how culture, media, and our own duality play with our inner psyche?

This work reflects on an isolated man's dilemma of seeking a space which is inwardly and outwardly at the same time. Perhaps, only a fluid state of mind can lead to an assimilation of the subtle realities of life...



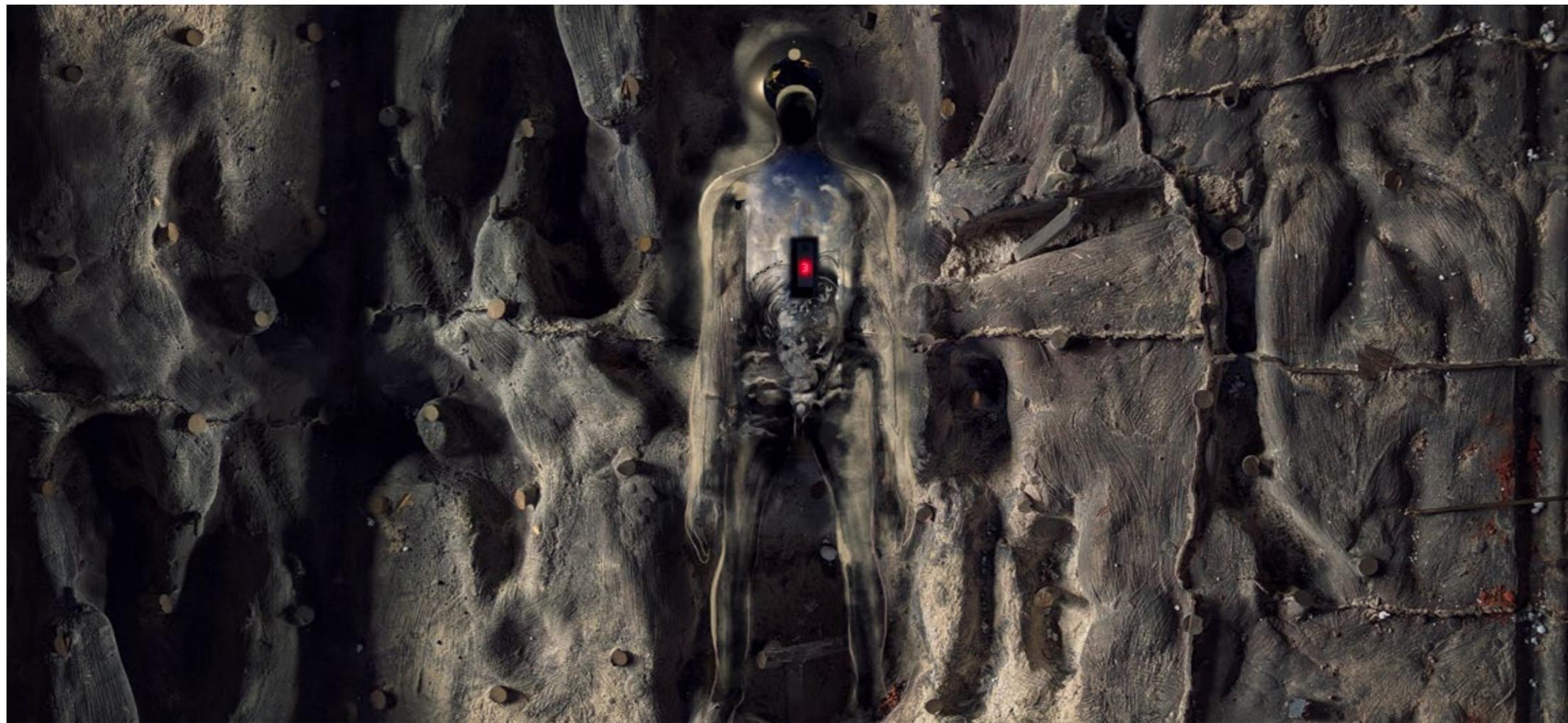
Migration: Sapiens and Economic Hierarchy
Digital Archival Print
13 x 35.5" / 32 x 90 cms; 2020
Edition of 15

In recent times, we have witnessed the struggles of migrant workers when the pandemic hit us suddenly. This made us ponder about the lack of humanitarian values today. The plight of the downtrodden was ignored by the government and also by society. They had to endure an unimaginable struggle just to reach a safe place. This work is a representation of the identity-less masses whose struggles disappeared into a void.



Yogi
Digital Archival Print
13 x 28" / 32 x 70 cms; 2020
Edition of 15

I envisioned drawing a human body, which can carry one into a meditative contemplative space. My studio is located in a fine art sculpture foundry, where I often encounter cast bronze pieces. My curious visual interest was never about the exterior part of the sculpture but the interior (negative) side as it looks very uneven, organic and concrete. This work may have materialised due to a subconscious influence of a dreamy carving of a 'prehistoric yogi meditating' as seen in the caves of Ajanta and Ellora that I had recently visited.



An Archaeological Object of the Soul
Digital Archival Print
11 x 27 " / 27 x 67 cms; 2020
Edition of 15

It is very painful to place an excavated object of runic rhyme lying somewhere at the bottom of my soul: it does not have a worldly history and at no time did it ever really exist somewhere in an archaeological space. Unfortunately, its finest particle which corroborates its essence is deteriorating day by day. At a time when I am on the verge of an inevitable outburst; it is my desire to register this image before it naturally disintegrates into a void...



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Medium and size variable
2020

*Original drawings and limited edition archival prints available for sale.
Also available as a limited edition signed artist zine.*

